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DE RUEHNT #0520 0790841
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
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FM AMEMBASSY TASHKENT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5364
INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE 3440
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE 1337
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE 0668
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE IMMEDIATE 1701
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 0063
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L TASHKENT 000520

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DEPARTMENT FOR SCA/CEN, DRL, PRM

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/20/2016
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREF](#) [PREL](#) [UZ](#)
SUBJECT: GOU ORDERS CLOSURE OF UNHCR

REF: A) TASHKENT 345 B) TASHKENT 430

Classified By: AMB. JON R. PURNELL, FOR REASONS 1.4 (B, D).

¶1. (C) UNHCR Protection Officer Asako Nozawa told poloff that the Uzbek mission in Geneva had delivered a note verbale to UNHCR headquarters on March 17 giving the Tashkent office thirty days to close. She added that the UN High Commissioner for Refugees will not intervene, and that the office will close as requested. The note stated that UNHCR,s office was opened in 1993 to support Afghan and Tajik refugees and that this mission is now complete. (Note: Over 1800 Afghan refugees are still registered with UNHCR,s office) ref A. End note.)

¶2. (C) In light of the closure request, Nozawa has met with visiting Department of Homeland Security officials to urge them to expedite their processing of refugee applications. (Note: Two Moscow-based DHS officials are visiting Tashkent for three weeks to interview refugee applicants. End note.)

¶3. (C) Comment: UNHCR,s role in evacuating 450 Uzbeks from Kyrgyzstan in summer 2005 angered the Uzbeks. The GOU has also criticized UNHCR over its statements of concern for Uzbeks refouled from neighboring countries and Ukraine (ref B). UNHCR,s involvement in getting Imam Nazarov out of Kazakhstan on March 15 may have been the last straw. This is the first time that the GOU has asked a UN agency to leave. It follows the GOU,s December 2005 order to UNHCR to close its Termez sub-office, which, in turn, precipitated the closure of the UNDP office in Termez.

PURNELL